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My Note Book.

Leonato.—Are these things spoken, or do I but dream?
Don John.—Sir, they are spoken, and these things are true.
—Much Ado About Nothing.



THE Franco-Spanish painter, Escosura, who some years ago disposed of a good many of his pictures in this country to our rich men who knew no better than to buy them, presumes altogether too much on the want of intelligence of the present generation of New Yorkers in thinking to fool them into the belief that, at the recent mock auction at Bucken's rooms, the pictures painted by himself really brought the ridiculous prices at which some of them were "knocked down." Occasionally some weak person was caught bidding above the upset price for some of the cheaper canvases, and was quickly "gathered in;" but the greater part of Mr. Escosura's paintings remained his at the close of the "sale." The process of fool-fishing was much the same when his old masters, tapestries, embroideries, arms and armor and bric-à-brac were reached. Comparatively few of his own things were actually sold; some persons, fatuously relying on the tradition that, in business transactions, an artist would not descend to deception, in good faith attended the sale, or left their bids with the auctioneer. They generally had cause to regret such confidence.

ON the whole, it seems Mr. Escosura did not fare badly. Thanks to the kindly notices of the preliminary exhibition by the newspaper critics, who treated this very vulnerable painter with marked courtesy and forbearance, he realized a considerable sum of money from the half-a-dollar admission fees. He should make the most of his success, such as it is, however; for I doubt that he will have another such a chance. Nevertheless, the game is to be tried again, with the variation that "the second part of the Escosura collection," which is to be offered at auction, is, I learn, to be composed almost entirely of goods collected for the purpose from Parisian dealers. These dealers, it is said, even contributed much of what was actually sold at the recent auction.

A MOVEMENT is on foot, I am told, to secure for the Boston Art Museum the famous collection of Japanese pottery formed by Professor Morse; which rumor, coupled with the recent suggestion of a Philadelphia paper that the collection be bought for that city, ought to lead to the consideration of the propriety of securing it for the Metropolitan Museum of Art. It is eminently a museum collection; indeed, there is no other such comprehensive and important one, even in Japan. About four thousand specimens are included in it, representing about seven hundred different marks and four hundred different kinds of pottery.

IF there is one thing proved more than another about Corots in this country, it is that most of the dealers even do not know a genuine Corot from a false one. Numerous cases could be cited of imitations of the master which have been palmed off upon buyers as genuine—which false attributions may or may not be due to the ignorance of the dealer; but an astounding case was recently brought to my attention of one of the best-known picture-dealers in this or any other country actually pronouncing as false one of the finest canvases by Corot ever imported. The picture was on exhibition at the Union League Club two or three months ago, having been sent there by Mr. Seney. In passing by it, the dealer declared that Corot never painted it. It is not in the familiar manner of Corot, it is true; but it is a work of such marvellous beauty that one might naturally have replied: "If Corot did not paint it, who could have done so?" Fortunately, the authenticity of the picture is established beyond a reasonable doubt by the testimony of the expert Mr. Durand-Ruel, who subsequently recognized it as a canvas painted to order for him by Corot in 1869. Mr. Seney, who bought it of Mr. Blakeslee, a Boston dealer, did not hear of this, and accepting, above his own judgment, the dictum of the rash critic who had declared it false, he put it into the hands of a dealer to get rid of it either by sale or exchange. The result is that it is now one of the gems of the superb collection of Mr. Irwin Davis, that gentleman having eagerly accepted it in exchange for a Diaz, a good picture, but worth much less than the other, artistically and intrinsically. The Corot is a verdant woodland scene, with, running through it, a creek with a man in a boat fishing for eels; in the foreground to the left is a group of women and children, and near by a boy is climbing a young beech tree. The bit of sky seen above the tree tops and the feeling for atmosphere, especially in the stirring of the leaves in the upper branches, are eminently characteristic of Corot in his best period.

THE newest gallery of importance in the city, for the exhibition of pictures for sale, is a fine apartment fitted up by Herter Brothers in their Fifth Avenue building, indicating that their business in paintings has grown considerably from the occasional sale to a client of the house, which about marked its limit a few years ago. It is evident from its interesting display, that the firm intends to rank among the important picture importers in the country. Jules Dupré is represented by a superb sunset on a boundless plain, with great, rolling fire clouds gloriously reflected in a pool in the foreground; Troyon by a composition very similar to one of that master in the Gibson collection in Philadelphia, to wit: a peasant woman on a donkey with panniers filled with vegetables, and a man driving a flock of sheep, to the right of the picture; Corot by a finished landscape and an interesting uncompleted study of a country road; Daubigny by a charming picture painted in 1875, showing a river foreground reflecting a gray sky at sunset, with cattle drinking, in the left middle distance, balanced by a man in a boat moored under a tree, to the right of the picture; Rousseau by a glowing river scene at early sunset, showing a projecting neck of land, with a big tree and a cottage reflected in the clear water; an angler is in the foreground, and, in the middle distance to the right, trees and another cottage are reflected in the river. Other painters represented are Meissonier, Perrault, De Neuville (by blindfolded Prussian

officers entering a French bombarded village—already described in these columns when exhibited at the Union League Club), Detaille, Rico, and Galeus.

THE New York World says that the St. Louis Exposition Association has agreed to pay Mr. Sedelmeyer \$12,000 for the use of Munkacsy's "Christ on Calvary" for six weeks and a half, and remarks:

The figure seems large, but when it is remembered that in the four months that have elapsed since the picture was first exhibited in New York over one hundred thousand people have visited it, paying for each admission 50 cents, the contract for forty days in St. Louis must seem reasonable.

It is not true that 100,000 persons—or anything approaching that number—in New York have paid 50 cents admission to see this huge, sensational canvas, and if the St. Louis people have agreed to pay \$12,000 on any such representation they have been misled. It is notorious that "complimentary" admissions to the show have been given away by the thousands. The price of admission, moreover, was reduced to 25 cents, and is so advertised in the same issue of The World as contains the above notice. It is an old "dodge" in the theatrical business to give a play a forced "run of over a hundred nights" in New York so as to obtain the most favorable terms from managers of provincial theatres; but it would seem to have been reserved for the entrepreneur of Mr. Munkacsy to apply such questionable tactics to the exhibition of a painting by an artist of reputation.

THE auction sale, at the Ortgies rooms, of the seventy-five pictures and studies by Jervis McEntee realized only \$6365, the highest price, \$350, being paid for the charming canvas "Fickle Skies of Autumn," which was bought for the Century Club.

By the death of Antoine Mauve, Holland loses an excellent painter. He was not sufficiently appreciated in this country and hardly in his own. His influence on our painters in water-colors has been remarkable, which is not to be wondered at when one considers his consummate technical knowledge. His reputation, however, will rest no less securely on his work in oils. Executed with equal facility and noble simplicity, they are poetical to a degree, without any apparent sacrifice to mere ideality. Due to the liberality of Mr. George I. Seney, there is an excellent example at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Under a gray sky, with a stretch of level meadow behind them, sheep are grazing "en bloc," and a hulking shepherd in the foreground, with back to the spectator, stands listlessly looking at them, clasping his stout staff horizontally behind him with both hands. Upon rising ground, to the right, is a weak growth of saplings, among which a few sheep are straggling, nibbling as they go.

AT the galleries of Cottier—who was the first to introduce into the United States the work of this charming painter, as he was also the first to make us acquainted with Mauve's compatriots, Mesdag and the brothers Maris, to say nothing of Corot and Monticelli, for whom he was the American entrepreneur—are several admirable examples of the dead artist. Of what unpromising materials could this wonderful Mauve make a picture! Here we have a bit of rough country road, with three or four scraggy young poplars to the right, and an old peasant, with a spade, trudging along, under an overcast sky. It is hardly more than a study, but it is full of the rugged poetry of nature, which this painter seemed to convey without effort every time he put his brush to canvas. Again we have a gray sky—Mauve loved to paint in a low key—and this time the picture is a cattle piece, with a black cow and a white one, cleverly foreshortened, accompanied by a hooded woman who is driving them toward us over a bleak moor honeycombed with puddles; the rain is just over, night is falling, and the chilly rawness of the air can almost be felt. Another Mauve shows a gray day on the sea-shore, possibly at Scheveningen, with half a dozen horses pulling in a large fishing boat, their shadows reflected in a pool in the sands; and yet another is a little wooded landscape, a delightful combination of greens, browns and grays, with a cow shoving her head into the bushes with a characteristic, jerky motion, admirably hit off by the painter.

THE American Art Association will sell in April, at Chickering Hall, "the collection of Mr. Henry J. Chapman, Jr.," consisting of nearly three hundred pictures and a quantity of marbles and bronzes. Mr. Chapman, I may say to the uninitiated, is a member of the Stock Exchange who trades considerably in pictures "on the quiet." Some of these pictures are his; but most of them are contributed by well-known dealers. Precisely which are Mr. Chapman's and which the dealers', I will not pretend to say. There is certainly a large proportion of good pictures, and Mr. Sutton assures me that "the whole collection will be sold absolutely without reserve."

NOTABLE are several Michels, mostly large and of excellent quality; a powerfully rendered storm on a rock-bound coast by Courbet, and a fleeing stag by the same trenchant hand; peaches and strawberries by Vollon; a sketchy but interesting little Ribot; two studies of women's heads by Delaroche; two canvases of Rousseau—not of the best; one important Van Marcke, with five living cows, and a wooden man milking a wooden cow, with the name of Van Marcke aggressively sprawled in red paint on the picture, so that there should be no mistake about it; Sarah Bernhardt's "Young Woman and Death," apparently a smaller replica of her Salon picture of that title; a small head of Christ, by—Diaz! and a badly drawn Cupid and Venus bearing the name of the same artist; a very blue little moonlight water-scene by Ziem; fishing boats in a storm, by Jules Dupré; and "The End of the Day," a superb painting by Lerolle, which has been etched for Knoedler & Co., who probably own it. This last-named canvas is a peaceful summer evening scene, showing, in profile, life size, two peasants—introduced at the extreme right of the canvas—husband and wife, wearily plodding homeward, with the full moon, which has just risen in majestic beauty above the hills, as a beacon. Truly an exquisite picture

It is doubtful whether there will be a more attractive portrait at the forthcoming exhibition at the Academy of Design than the exquisitely painted little cabinet picture of a young woman in ball costume, which Mr. Dewing intends to send there. The

model—for, in truth, this swan-necked, distinguished-looking brunette is that and nothing else—is seen in profile, easily seated in a Louis Seize chair, enshrined, as it were, among the generous folds of her yellow tulle-covered satin dress and the golden circumambient atmosphere. In tone, the picture leaves nothing to be desired, and it is legitimately secured by solid painting and not by bituminous glazes. In spite of the unusually high price at which it is marked, the artist, I hear, has found an appreciative buyer; the picture is to go to Boston—to Mrs. Jack Gardner—she who was painted by Mr. Sargent. Mr. Dewing's picture of "The Hours," which won him high praise a year ago, and was bought by Mr. Cheney, the silk manufacturer of Manchester-by-the-Sea, being somewhat too large for any room in the house, has been made the central point of interest in a little addition to the building proper, fitted up cosily with seats and tables as a sort of lounging-place.

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THE dispersion at auction of Mr. Albert Spencer's pictures at Chickering Hall, under the direction of Mr. S. P. Avery, was, all things considered, the most remarkable sale of the kind ever held in this country. The sixty-eight pictures were all sold in about two hours, bringing \$284,025, and, expenses deducted, Mr. Spencer received a check for \$268,823.75, a clear \$50,000 more than he counted on. Mr. Somerville, the auctioneer, acquitted himself admirably. He appreciated the fact that the merits of the pictures had been thoroughly discussed beforehand by more competent critics than himself, and he wisely confined himself to receiving bids, without waste of eloquence. The highest price was paid for Troyon's "Drove of Cattle and Sheep," which Mr. Avery bought for Mr. Cornelius Vanderbilt for \$26,000, Governor Ames having ventured to bid as high as \$25,000 for it. Delacroix's "Christ at the Tomb" fell to Mr. A. C. Clark for \$10,600. At the Laurent-Richard sale in 1873 it brought 29,000 francs. Mr. Clark next got Rousseau's "Sunset in a Wood" for \$5,000; then Millet's "Gleaners" for \$10,400, and Delacroix's "Tiger Quenching his Thirst"—which wise selections might establish his reputation as a genuine amateur. But he fell from grace when he bought "The Serpent Charmer" of Gérôme for \$19,500; for who can account for a taste that includes Delacroix and Gérôme! Mr. Cyrus J. Lawrence, a most appreciative collector of Barye's work, paid \$500 for "A Tiger at Play," and went home happy. The other Barye water-color fell to Mr. J. F. Sutton, who is also collecting the works of Barye, but presumably to sell.

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MR. ISAAC W. BELL got a bargain in the little figure by Millet, "After Bathing," at \$500; it probably cost three times that sum, and in Paris would bring seven or eight thousand francs. The "Diana Reposing" was not high at \$2500—Mr. Irwin-Davis bid up to \$2400 for it. I am told that it went to a St. Louis collector. Another excellent Millet, "A Shepherdess," went for \$7500 to Mr. Potter Palmer, of Chicago, who made all his purchases with judgment. The finest Rousseau, "An Autumn Evening," was carried off by Mrs. W. B. Ogden for \$6100. It would not have been dear at \$8000, as the market rules. A few years ago, Mr. Spencer bought it in Paris of Mr. Leroi, a dealer, for 45,000 francs. Add the duties to that sum, and you will see that there would be a heavy loss on the picture. It would show a pretty profit, however, compared with its original cost to Mr. Durand Ruel, who, in 1867, bought it of Rousseau, in a lot of *seventy* pictures and studies, paying for the whole 100,000 francs. Mrs. Ogden may be said to have got another bargain in the "Le Soir" of Breton, at \$20,500. But for its great size (77x46) it would doubtless have brought much more. The Meissoniers the dealers thought went low at \$9200 for "A Standard Bearer" (No. 42), which was bought by Schaus, and "A Musician" (No. 52), at \$8800, bought by Knoedler. They would bring 50,000 francs each in Paris. The Diaz figure subjects sold for about half their cost. Mr. Spencer had paid liberally for them, as he did for his Rousseaus. He bought his two Daubignys cheap and made a handsome profit on them. The fine Decamps fell to Schaus, a decided bargain at \$3500. Corot's "Morning," an inferior picture, was decidedly dear at the \$8400 Mr. Sampson paid for it.

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THE following table consists of pictures in the Spencer collection, originally owned by Mr. Durand Ruel. It shows what they cost between the years 1873 and 1878, compared with what they brought at the recent sale:

No.	Artist.	Subject.	1873-78.	1888.
5—Dupré.		"Study of Trees"	750 fcs.	\$ 600
6—Barye.		"A Tiger at Play"	1,000 fcs.	\$ 500
14—Rousseau.		"A Lone Tree"	750 fcs.	\$1,200
16—Troyon.		"The Old Oak"	1,000 fcs.	\$1,900
18—Fromentin.		"Horse Trading in the Desert"	1,000 fcs.	\$2,525
21—Rousseau.		"Plains of Barbizon"	1,000 fcs.	\$1,850
24—Millet.		"Peasant Woman and Child"	2,000 fcs.	\$3,500
28—Rousseau.		"Cottage at Berri"	6,000 fcs.	\$5,200
30—Dupré.		"Sunset in Autumn"	1,200 fcs.	\$3,000
31—Rousseau.		"The Ravines of Apremont"	1,000 fcs.	\$4,300
32—Diaz.		"A Siesta"	1,000 fcs.	\$1,000
33—Delacroix.		"Christ at the Tomb"	10,000 fcs.	\$10,600
40—Millet.		"Diana Reposing"	1,500 fcs.	\$2,500
41—Rousseau.		"Sunset in a Wood"	1,000 fcs.	\$5,000
43—Diaz.		"Above the Clouds"	3,000 fcs.	\$ 950
44—Millet.		"A Shepherdess"	2,000 fcs.	\$7,500
45—Diaz.		"Assumption of the Virgin"	4,000 fcs.	\$2,650
46—Rousseau.		"Gleaners"	1,500 fcs.	\$6,000
54—Millet.		"Sleeping Woman"	1,000 fcs.	\$2,500
56—Troyon.		"A Cloud Burst"	1,000 fcs.	\$3,300
59—Corot.		"A Farm at Coubon"	2,500 fcs.	\$7,000
60—Daubigny.		"Midsummer—Edge of a Pond"	2,000 fcs.	\$8,650
61—Fromentin.		"Arab Falconer"	8,000 fcs.	\$6,500
64—Diaz.		"A Clearing in the Forest of Fontainebleau"	4,000 fcs.	\$4,700
65—Fromentin.		"Women of the Duled-Kayls, Sahara"	7,000 fcs.	\$6,400

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THE following table gives, with few omissions, the names of the buyers at the Spencer sale. The only doubtful name is that of the purchaser of the Rousseau, No. 31. Possibly the picture was bought for Governor Ames, of Boston:

No.	Artist.	Size.	Title.	Buyer.	Price.
1—Plassan		3 x 4	"The Anniversary"	John T. Martin	\$250
2—Hamon		14 x 17½	"Love Lingers"	Mrs. W. B. Ogden	425
3—Barye		9½ x 5¾	"Doe and Fawn"	J. F. Sutton	300
4—Diaz		4½ x 7¼	"The Pet Dog"	Avery	500
5—Dupré		9½ x 7¼	"Study of Trees"	"Clark"	600
6—Barye		11¼ x 9	"A Tiger at Play"	Cyrus J. Lawrence	500
7—Plassan		7¼ x 4¼	"On the Seine—near Boissise"	S. Loeb	525
8—Boldini		4½ x 5¾	"A Coquette"		675
9—Diaz		6 x 4½ (oval)	"Group of Flowers"	Avery	325
10—Stevens		12½ x 18	"The Evening of Election Day"	Albert Hilton	400
11—Millet		6½ x 5½	"After Bathing"	Isaac W. Bell	500
12—Hamon		15½ x 12	"Love on a Visit"	H. S. Wilson	1,100
13—Diaz		13½ x 9	"Landscape under Sunshine"	R. E. Moore	2,250
14—Rousseau		8¼ x 6¾	"A Lone Tree—Autumn"	Frank Hill Smith	1,200
15—Knaus		6½ x 9	"Les Amours et les Roses"	Knoedler	2,100
16—Troyon		18 x 21	"The Old Oak—Early Autumn"	Naumburg	1,900
17—Diaz		12 x 15½	"A Bouquet of Flowers"	Mrs. W. C. Whitney	900
18—Fromentin		10 x 8½	"Horse Trading in the Desert"	Schaus	2,525
19—Dupré		18 x 22	"Fishing Boat in a Storm"	C. Lambert	1,075
20—Boldini		4½ x 5¾	"Boucher in his Studio"	C. T. Barney	750
21—Rousseau		14½ x 10½	"The Plains of Barbizon"	George H. Hill	1,850
22—Diaz		7½ x 12½	"Cupid's Lesson"	Knoedler	900
23—Knaus		9 x 10½	"Head of a Brunette"		3,000
24—Millet		15 x 18	"Peasant Woman and Child"	S. T. Warren	3,500
25—Daubigny		26 x 14	"A Late Summer Afternoon"	Knoedler	5,000
26—Diaz		10½ x 15½	"Page and Hounds"	S. Loeb	1,300
27—Fromentin		23 x 15	"A Boar Hunt"		3,800
28—Rousseau		12 x 9	"A Cottage at Berri"	Schaus	5,200
29—Diaz		14 x 10	"After Rain—Sundown"	H. S. Wilson	1,100
30—Dupré		15½ x 9½	"Sunset in Autumn"	John T. Martin	3,000
31—Rousseau		21 x 11	"The Ravines of Apremont"	H. W. Ladd, Boston	4,300
32—Diaz		15½ x 10½	"A Siesta"		1,000
33—Delacroix		18 x 21	"Christ at the Tomb"	A. C. Clark	10,600
34—Corot		28 x 23	"Morning"	E. C. Sampson	8,400
35—Decamps		19 x 23½	"Turkish Butcher Shop"	Schaus	3,500
36—Diaz		12½ x 9	"Landscape under Shadow"	Knoedler	1,700
37—Dupré		21½ x 17½	"Cottage at L'Isle Adam"	H. S. Wilson	3,050
38—Fromentin		16 x 12	"The Fire"	Sedelmeyer	1,050
39—Diaz		18½ x 23½	"In the Woods"	H. S. Wilson	5,900
40—Millet		12½ x 15½	"Diana Reposing"		2,500
41—Rousseau		12 x 9	"Sunset in a Wood"	A. C. Clark	5,000
42—Meissonier		5¼ x 9¼	"Standard Bearer of the Flemish Civil Guard"	Schaus	9,200
43—Diaz		10½ x 17½	"Above the Clouds"	Avery	950
44—Millet		9½ x 14	"A Shepherdess"	Potter Palmer	7,500
45—Diaz		9½ x 14	"The Assumption of the Virgin"	Potter Palmer	2,650
46—Rousseau		15 x 11	"An Autumn Evening"	Mrs. W. B. Ogden	6,000
47—Millet		11½ x 14½	"Gleaners"	A. C. Clark	10,400
48—Diaz		8½ x 12½	"Venus and Cupid"	C. Oelberman	2,000
49—Domingo		5 x 7¼	"Card Players"	S. D. Warren	3,400
50—Knaus		6½ x 9	"Le Salut des Amours"		1,550
51—Diaz		12½ x 16	"Scene from the 'Decameron'"	Charles Stewart Smith	2,825
52—Meissonier		8 x 10¾	"A Musician"	Knoedler	8,800
53—Delacroix		15 x 10	"A Tiger Quenching his Thirst"	A. C. Clark	6,100
54—Millet		17½ x 11½	"Sleeping Woman"	C. T. Barney	2,500
55—Diaz		17 x 11	"Passing Storm"		4,100
56—Troyon		13½ x 18	"A Cloud Burst"	Knoedler	3,300
57—Knaus		14 x 18	"Drove of Swine—Evening Effect"		2,050
58—Rousseau		17½ x 11	"Sunset"	Potter Palmer	7,300
59—Corot		28 x 20	"A Farm at Coubon"	Knoedler	7,000
60—Daubigny		32 x 18	"Midsummer—Edge of a Pond"	H. S. Wilson	8,650
61—Fromentin		28 x 42½	"Arab Falconer"	D. W. Powers, Rochester	6,500
62—Isabey		35 x 25	"A Fête at the Hotel Rambouillet, Paris"	R. E. Moore	4,600
63—Troyon		39 x 26	"Drove of Cattle and Sheep"	Cornelius Vanderbilt	26,000
64—Diaz		39 x 30	"A Clearing in the Forest of Fontainebleau"	Knoedler	4,700
65—Fromentin		28½ x 42½	"Women of the Duled-Kayls, Sahara"	Avery	6,400
66—Gérôme		47 x 32	"The Serpent Charmer"	A. C. Clark	19,500
67—Schreyer		47 x 33½	"The Advance Guard"		5,000
68—Breton		77 x 46	"Le Soir"	Mrs. W. B. Ogden	20,500

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WHY Mr. Spencer sold his pictures remains unexplained. It is not true that he has become a devotee to the "impressionist" cult. Mr. Spencer had a few examples of Monet and Pissaro before the sale and he has them yet. That is all.

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THE recent sale of the alleged "second part of the Trivulzio collection" was another of those "made-up" affairs, in the interests of certain dealers, which one has learned intuitively to connect with Leavitt's auction rooms. Books that have been "sold" again and again without changing proprietors, as usual formed a considerable part of the stock. A mock auction unfortunately is something which the law cannot touch; but what should command the attention of the authorities is the regular appearance, on occasions of this kind, of villainous "erotica" which seems to be kept on hand for the purpose of spicing the catalogue. I trust sincerely that next time any of these vile books and prints, so brazenly announced by Messrs. Leavitt, are put into a sale, that Mr. Anthony Comstock will seize them and arrest every one in any way responsible for their appearance. There is no reason why the law should wink at the existence of these printed obscenities simply because they are provided for the depraved tastes of the rich. The true bibliophile, I am sure, would rejoice to know that all publications of this odious class were sunk at the bottom of the ocean.

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As an illustration of the unscrupulousness of auctioneers in "stuffing" sales in this way, I may mention that not long ago, when the library of a learned clergyman was offered at auction in this city, his family was horrified to find that a number of erotic books had been catalogued as part of his collection.

MONTEZUMA.

THE GIBSON AND VAN ELTEN PICTURES.

THE water-colors shown by Mr. W. Hamilton Gibson at the American Art Galleries March 13th and following days covered a wide range of subjects. Mr. Gibson has been known mainly as a draughtsman of dainty landscapes and flower pieces for illustration; and in these he has displayed an accurate knowledge of plant and insect forms and a surpassingly delicate style of treatment. His exhibition was, therefore, a surprise, even to those who thought themselves well acquainted with his work; for a large proportion of the water-colors shown were broad studies of effects, evidently done directly from nature, without premeditation or addition. It was easy to distinguish these from his studio pictures, which are generally in a brown key of color and prettily composed, while the sketches referred to are mostly in a cool key, and are very impressionistic in appearance. Spring mists and blossoming apple-trees are what Mr. Gibson excels in painting outside of his previously known specialty of minute flower drawing; but some autumn studies and snow effects also deserve mention, for careful detail as well as generally truthfulness.

Mr. Van Elten's display of oil paintings, made at the same time and place, was less of a surprise, except as to quantity. The amount of work—good, thorough, deliberate work—which he has turned out is enormous. He works, however, in the old method, from sketches and partial studies in his studio, and as none of his preparatory work was shown, he did not offer as much variety of subject or of method as Mr. Gibson. Still, his streams, brooks and meadows, mountains and wood interiors, though all shown under the effects of settled summer weather, were far from appearing monotonous, notwithstanding their great number.

The Cabinet.

TALKS WITH EXPERTS.

III. — MR. HEROMICH SHUGIO ON JAPANESE KNIFE-HANDLES AND SWORD-PINS.

"AFTER sword-guards," said Mr. Shugio, "it is natural to speak of knife-handles and sword-pins, or, as we call them, kodsuka and kogui, as they are commonly found attached to the short swords—wagizashi and tanto—and sometimes, also, to long swords. Though less important than the guards, they are interesting to collectors, because of their artistic designs."

"I presume the best of them were made by the celebrated sword-guard makers?"

"No, that is not the case. Noted knife-handle makers sometimes made sword-guards though."

"Why is that?"

"In the first place, knives encased in the sword scabbard were not generally worn before 1550; while, as you already know, several of the most celebrated sword-guard makers flourished before that time. And, then, the making of a knife-handle, usually of soft metal, does not require the same kind of skill as sword-guard making."

"Why are knife-handles of soft metal?"

"Partly for artistic reasons, partly to save the scabbard from being scratched. Not being intended to ward off a blow, there was no reason to use tough and hard metal."

"They are seldom of iron, then?"

"Very seldom; and usually when they are of iron, the back is of shakudo, or silver, or other soft metal."

"How is it that the blades are not imported?"

"They are not ornamented. Collectors here want only the artistic part—that is, the handle. In Japan we

act rather differently, because the knife-blades were occasionally made by famous sword-makers."

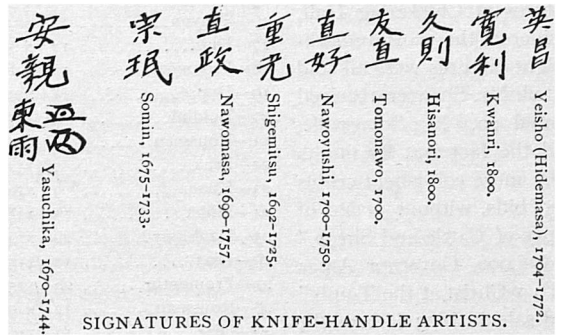
"Do you not think that Japanese taste must finally govern our collectors in Japanese art matters?"

"Perhaps so. Here is a sword complete, with all its mountings. The knife-blade is of good quality and is peculiar in that it has its back fashioned into a saw. A Japanese collector would not think of separating blade from handle or knife from sword in a case like this."

"The blade, I see, is shaped like a sword-blade."

"Yes, only not so curved; and it is bevelled at the edge and point."

"But those sword-pins, they are what some collectors



call bodkins and what others say were used as chopsticks, are they not?"

"Those that are all in one piece, usually the oldest, were used as bodkins, to pin the court cap to the hair, as American ladies fastened their hats last year. They were also used for scratching the head. Later, some time in the last century, that custom died out, or nearly, and then the sword-pins were divided to make chopsticks for use in camp or at a picnic. I am inclined to think, though, that none of the old bodkins were made over for this purpose, but that chopsticks were made in the same shape, only divided. I call both sorts sword-pins, as a general term."

"Some English and French writers maintain that the

looking at. It consists often of a bird or a spray of flowers thrown on without an enclosing line."

"The ornament of both knife-handles and sword-pins must commonly be either oblong or upright. Figures and horses are commonly used in the former case; landscapes in the latter, I observe."

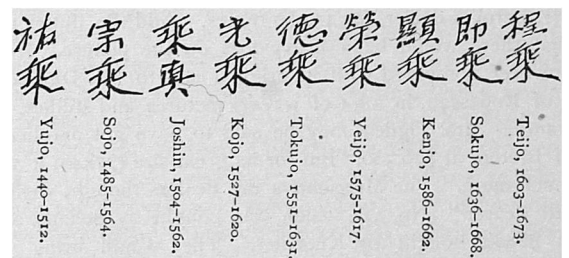
"In a large collection it is likely that you would be able to prove that to be right as to the majority of both sorts of designs. But you would find many examples of the contrary. Here is a group of jolly fat men in copper, arranged diagonally across the handle; and here are a number of horses in their sheds in black shakudo, on silver, disposed lengthwise on it; and here, again, is a group of apes, in gold, on shebutchi, sitting right in the middle. It is true that all of the illustrations you propose printing with our talk are oblong compositions, but there is a great deal of variety in them."

"As to makers' names?"

"I give you a list of the most noted. But let me call your attention to one or two points concerning names and marks on knife-handles which may easily escape the collector. The name of the maker is often not found on the back of the handle, where one would naturally look for it. It is then to be looked for on the butt that projects from the scabbard. Again, it is not uncommon to find two names—that of the maker and that of the artist who originated the design. And what persons not conversant with Japanese may take to be the mark of either of these is sometimes only a line of poetry or other inscription of the kind."

"Can any historical details be given about the best makers of knife-handles?"

"A great deal more than you could find room for. Goto Yujo was the first to work on them; and influenced by the artistic movement of his time, he followed, as a rule, the designs of the famous painter Kano Motonobu, who was one of his most intimate friends. He was the founder of the Goto family, and is considered as the father of this special branch of Japanese art. He died in 1512. The fourteen signatures which I give you are those of his descendants, each the head of the family and the most noted artist of his time."

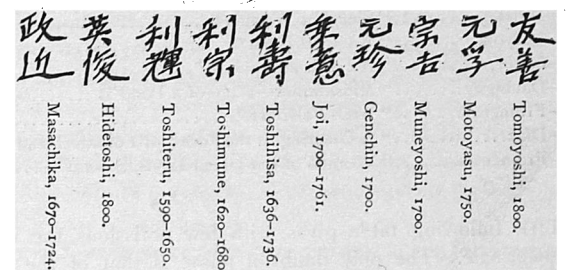


SIGNATURES OF JAPANESE KNIFE-HANDLE ARTISTS.

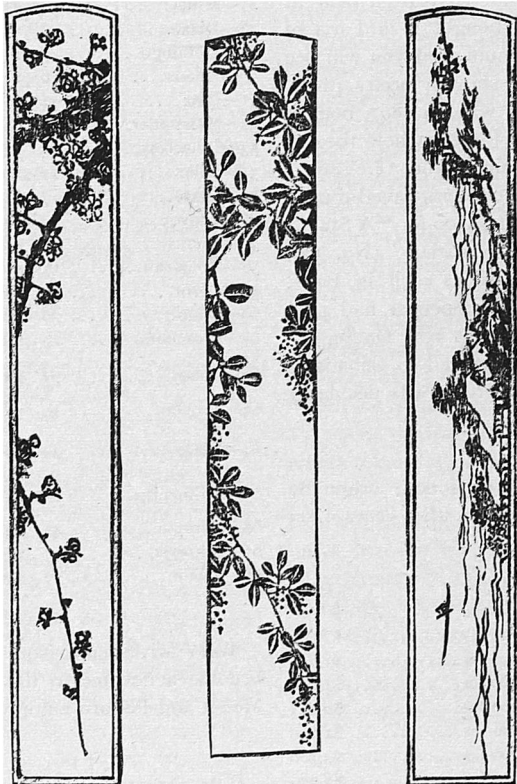
"But were there not other families almost as famous for excellence in the same branch of art?"

"Yes; but they did not produce so many masters as the Goto family. Still, Somin, of the Yok'oya family, is celebrated for the introduction of a particular kind of incised work, in which each line is cut by the knife from one side only. This we call katakiribori. Most of his works are from designs by Yei-icho, a famous painter of the latter part of the seventeenth century."

"Then there was Yasuchika, of the Nara family, whose works show the influence of the principles which he thus lays down in a letter to a friend: 'The artist,' he says, 'must be particular about the design for his work, must be thorough in execution, must always be pure in thought, and he must be satisfied to remain poor all his life.' This artist, Toshihisa and Jioi are known as the trio of the Nara family. Nagatsune of Kioto is also highly rated; and so is Hirata Hikoshiro, the first Japanese worker in cloisonné, which he learned of a Korean; so, too, are Konkan of the Iwamoto family, Kiyotōshi of the Tanaka family, Noriyoki of the Hamana family and Haruaki of the Kawano."



SIGNATURES OF JAPANESE KNIFE-HANDLE ARTISTS.



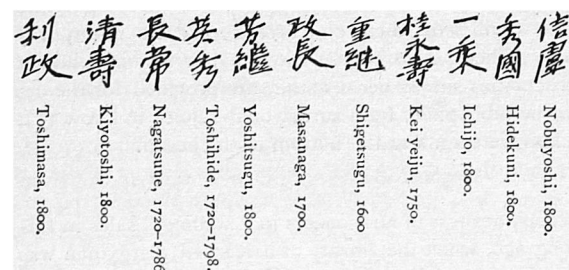
JAPANESE KNIFE-HANDLES.

principal use of these sword-pins was to mark the head of a slain enemy, just as our Indians used to take the scalp, in order to claim the honor of having killed him."

"Yes, I know the story. And something of the sort may have occurred once or twice; and there may be some legend about it. But it never was customary to do so. I can imagine a man taking up the head of a decapitated enemy and holding it by the sword-pin thrust through the hair; but as for a man's jabbing his own sword-pin into his enemy's head to mark it as his trophy, that may have been done once, perhaps, but it certainly was not the custom."

"The ornament must be confined to the broad upper part of the sword-pin, it would seem."

"Naturally. It would be as much out of place on the shank of a pin as on the blade of a knife. But it is not always enclosed in a cartouche, as on those that you are



SIGNATURES OF JAPANESE KNIFE-HANDLE ARTISTS.